

**Deputy President.**—I must put the amendment first to the votes.

**Dr. A. G. Menon.**—The main proposition is accepted by the House. Where is the necessity for the other?

**Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.**—I withdraw the amendment.

*The amendment was withdrawn with leave.*

#### 9. Panchayat allotments.

**Deputy President.**—The next is the resolution of Mr. Raja.

**Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.**—The resolution reads thus:—

*“This Council recommends that a standing committee be appointed for the distribution of Panchayat allotments in the budget among the various Panchayats of the State.”* In British India, in the Provincial Councils as well as in the Central Legislature, there are standing committees in almost all the Departments of the Government; specially Excise, Public Works, Education, etc. This resolution is only the attempt for the beginning of an active participation in the administration of the country. In this particular Department, there is a lot of complaint that the distribution of Panchayat allotments is not fair. No personal aspersion is meant against the particular Head of the Department. The trouble is that it is very strongly suspected that these allotments are made very often without the knowledge of even the Head of the Department. I shall not go further than that; but I have more materials, if necessary, to show that the distribution is not fair. Fortune has showered her choicest blessings on the favoured few. A lot of money also lapses in this Department and there are a series of transfers of allotments. This works very inequitably against Panchayats who may not be in the good looks of some of the controlling officers in the office of the Superintendent of Panchayats. It is to voice this feeling that this resolution is now brought to this Council.

**Mr. C. Barton Wright.**—Mr. President, Sir, I have great pleasure in supporting this resolution. The Panchayats form an important unit in the administrative machinery of our State and as such the Government should spare no pains in extending their beneficent activities to the people. No scheme of rural re-construction can be attempted unless there is a well-developed system of Panchayats. Is it not strange, therefore, that this Department does not receive at the hands of the Government that care and attention which its importance deserves? Amongst the unsatisfactory features in the working of this Department, special stress has to be laid on the unequal distribution of allotments in the budget among the various Panchayats of the State. Panchayats which are under active

and vigilant Presidents manage to get adequate allotments; while others under Presidents who come more for the honour of the office than for its duties and responsibilities are very often neglected. Hence it is not uncommon to come across villages which are handicapped for want of roads, irrigation tanks, wells and rural dispensaries. It may be that some of these unfortunate villages do possess roads and tanks; but now they are in a state of total neglect owing to want of proper annual repair and maintenance.

This state of affairs can be improved if a Standing Committee were appointed to advise the Department for a proper distribution of Panchayat allotments as is suggested by the Hon'ble mover. It will be well if such Standing Committees of the House are attached to spending Departments, especially Education and Public Works. The appointment of such committees will have a two-fold effect. In the first place, it will enable the Departmental Heads to obtain a correct view of the needs of the people. Secondly it will familiarise the elected members with the processes of administration and thereby make the relations between the executive and the legislative more intimate and harmonious. I, therefore, hope that our Government will make a start in this direction by accepting the resolution under discussion and appointing an advisory Standing Committee of the House for the Panchayat Department.

**Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.**—Panchayat is one of the many limbs of self-government, and there is no meaning in allowing a Government officer to sit very tight over it. A general supervision of the working of the Panchayat may well lie with the Government officer, but he should not be made a complete autocrat of that Department. That a judicious distribution of the amounts allotted for Panchayats is not properly made is a cry that can be heard from every other Panchayat. Without funds, Panchayats can be expected to do very little, and if there is no proper distribution of funds amongst the Panchayats, a proper working of them cannot be expected. A Standing Committee, that will look after the proper distribution of funds amongst the various Panchayats, is the only solution for the proper working of them. A lapse of such a big amount as Rs. 28,415 in 1103 and the transfer of Rs. 11,700 of the allotted amounts from one work allotted in the budget to other works not allotted in the budget is sufficient proof that proper distribution is not made among the various Panchayats. Glaring differences may be seen if a perusal is made of the distribution of allotments to Panchayats during the last two years, one Panchayat being given less than Rs. 100 and another Panchayat

more than Rs. 4,000 and even in an amount of less than Rs. 100, a portion is lapsing. To prevent such things I move that the resolution may be accepted by the House.

**Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.**—I had tabled an amendment to this resolution that the words “with a non-official majority” be added after the word “committee” in this resolution. So that the amended form will be thus:— *“This Council recommends that a Standing Committee with a non-official majority be appointed for the distribution of Panchayat allotments in the budget among the various Panchayats of the State.”* The arguments that have been advanced for the appointment of the committee will hold good in the case of the appointment of a committee with a non-official majority. Of course arrangements are proposed by the particular Head of the Department and some observations have been made regarding the rather improper way in which the allotments are now being made. To have the effect of having a wholesome check upon the present distribution and making the distribution more equitable than at present, this resolution has been brought forward, and I submit that this end can be gained better by having a non-official majority in this committee. Therefore, I request that the House may be pleased to accept the amendment.

**Mr. A. B. Salem.**—I beg to second that amendment and in passing I desire to say only one word. I have been just looking through the Panchayat Work Register of this year, and we are in the month of Vrischigam. In this book that I have examined, only Rs. 9 have been spent so far.

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—Is that the audit register?

**Mr. A. B. Salem.**—Panchayat Work Register. Comptroller's Office Register.

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—Only after the bills they get, are the amounts posted.

**Mr. A. B. Salem.**—The money that is spent so far is only Rs. 9. So far as is noted in Volume I, I find only Rs. 9. I think throughout this book perhaps it will not be more than Rs. 20. If anything has been spent, it would have come to the register.

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—Only at the end of the month bills come.

**Mr. K. Krishna Pisharodi.**—They must be audited and noted. That is no correct test.

**Mr. A. B. Salem.**—I have only noted what I have seen. From what I have seen, I find that not much money has been spent. So far, how much has been spent, that information is with the Government. You can ask your Member and say what

it is. You have got the facts with you. We have got only our tongues with us.

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—We have got also tongues.

**Mr. A. B. Salem.**—I second that proposition, Sir, and it is very essential that a non-official majority should be there to work in collaboration with this Department.

**Mr. I. Raman Menon.**—In support of the resolution, the Member for the Jenmies says that sufficient attention has not been paid to the requirements of the Panchayats and that proper supervision is not being exercised by the Head of the Department and so forth. Well, the budgets are supplied by the Panchayats themselves. They are tabulated in my office and finally sent to the Secretariat. There is a Standing Finance Committee which scrutinises the Panchayat programme before the whole programme is laid before the Council.

**Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.**—The Standing Finance Committee cannot propose any allotment.

**Mr. I. Raman Menon.**—The whole budget is discussed in the Council by all the Members.

**Mr. A. Eachara Menon.**—Not the Panchayat allotment.

**Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.**—We can only omit. We cannot propose.

**Mr. A. B. Salem.**—We have no power to ask them to add anything.

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—The House is at perfect liberty to make observations on the several items in the Panchayat programme, so far as I know. I note there have been some criticisms about the non-inclusion of certain works, and as soon as possible works which are not included in the current year are included in the ensuing year. Well, as matters now stand, I don't know what purpose will be served.

**Dr. A. G. Menon.**—Do the Government accept our proposal, Sir?

**Mr. I. Raman Menon.**—The Government oppose.

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—I only want some information from the Hon'ble mover. The Hon'ble Member spoke of certain Standing Committee of the Imperial and Provincial Councils, etc. So far as I know, I have not made a careful study, but so far as I have read from the papers, these Standing Committees are concerned more with the laying down of policies than with their execution. They don't go and say such and such work should be included, and that such and such work should not be included. I am open to correction. I only state my own information. I have not carefully read rules of

Standing Committees appointed by the Provincial Councils. But I have read the Mysore Rules. In Mysore there are two Standing Committees, there is a Standing Committee for Railway Public Works, electric works, etc., there is another committee for local self-Government, public health, sanitation etc. So far as I have understood the Mysore rules these Standing Committees are to advise the Government on questions of policy. They have not got the time, they have not got the leisure to go through each and every item of a number of budgets. There are village unions, Municipalities and District Boards. The Standing Committee lay down certain general principles. They are concerned with the policy of local self-Government but not with the details of local administration of each local body. That is a laborious task and the Hon'ble Members of the Legislative Council who have got a lot of other important works to do may not find time. Their intention is good. I always speak from a practical point of view. If you will only look at it from a practical point of view, you will find for 85 Panchayats, for a large number of local bodies, there will be a huge mass of distribution. A very liberal allotment is made for the Village Panchayats every year. One Panchayat may be sending a distribution statement for Rs. 15,000 for a large number of useful works. I have myself examined the same when I was in charge of the Panchayat Department and I quite recognise their desire and I also respect them for that. So far as our villages are concerned every item of work included by them will be found very necessary. If you add all these together it will come to 6 or 7 lakhs. Then you have got to sit up and eliminate a number of items, and prepare re-distribution statements,

**Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.**—So what the manager can do no committee can do.

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—The committee is capable of doing a great deal. The manager has got to do it under the supervision of the Superintendent of Panchayats. If you read the rules, there it will be found that the Panchayats must prepare their programmes of works. I will give you the stages. The Panchayats prepare the programme. One Panchayat will say, we want 10 thousand, another will want Rs. 12 thousand for such and such a road, etc. They will send the programmes and the Superintendent will get the whole thing consecutively; his office will add up the figures and it will come to several lakhs. The manager has not got sufficient training and sufficient knowledge of men and things and that broad outlook of things to see which is necessary and which not, and so naturally the Superintendent pays personal attention. And he makes some elimination and probably he may make some additions too and then the whole thing goes to the Government.

Government may make additions and subtractions. We have got a sort of chain of working agency: Panchayats first, Superintendent of Panchayat, second and then finally the Government. It passes, through a number of processes then the Standing Finance Committee and then during the Budget Session. I can quite understand the very good noble intention of the Hon'ble mover of the resolution that, Panchayats being units of local self-Government, there must be an equitable distribution of the allotments and if a standing committee is appointed the whole thing will be got done by that body. The budgets will be received sanctioned in Chingam. How will they be able to put up chiras in the month of Kanni? The whole thing has got to be done quickly. I thought over the whole thing. I recognise the very good intentions of the Hon'ble mover, the Member for the Jenmies. Suppose there are 5 members in a committee. Each member will have his own time, he will have his own engagements, all of them must sit together in a central place to attend to the work.

**Dr. A. G. Menon.**—No, no; only a quorum will sit. When the committee comes, the rules will always come.

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—It will be beyond the range of practical politics. These things were referred to me. I am also a very strong supporter of Standing Committees personally. I have got a very strong faith in these local units, but their place will be in a different constitution. When there is a responsible Government, I can understand Standing Committees having powers and all other things.

**Dr. A. G. Menon.**—Are we not responsible at present?

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—I advised Government like this. The distribution of Panchayat allotments among as many as 85 Panchayats is purely an administrative detail and the entrustment of these will only cause delay in actual practice. I suppose nobody can deny that.

**Mr. C. Barton Wright.**—If they volunteer to do so, why don't you give them a chance?

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—I do not know if there are gentlemen who can find time for scrutinising the budgets of 85 Panchayats. There will be about 2000 items. If there are members who have got plenty of leisure at their disposal, if they spend 12 hours, a day, go to the Panchayats now and then, they will be able to get suggestions from some of the Panchayats. Panchayats will not be satisfied if they are not given all they ask. You will have got to sit together. There will be difference of opinion between members. One member will say I am in charge of such and such Panchayat. I want such and such an

allotment for my Panchayat. It is only when you look at it from the practical point of view, you will realise the difficulties: Standing Committees of legislatures of India and elsewhere are concerned only, so far as I know, with the consideration of questions of administrative policy and principles and not with the details of the policy laid down. This is the advice I gave to the Government. If there are members who will sit up together, who will have leisure and make a distribution, certainly that will be an ideal. Is it possible to attain such an ideal? We have got to look into the practical side of things.

**Dr. A. R. Menon.**—Not by the rising. Let us see for one year.

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—I think the Panchayat Superintendent, if I am not mistaken, will have before him in his office some 300 files for transfers of allotments.

I think the Panchayat Superintendent will also be convinced that such and such amount is not required. Why not transfer? Several files containing applications for transfer may be pending at a time and then he has to report to the Diwan for orders. Therefore, I expect that the Hon'ble Member for Trichur will realise the difficulties. I would ask the Superintendent of Panchayats to give a list of those pending files where Panchayats have asked for additional allotments or for transfers and place them before three or four gentlemen and then arrive at a definite conclusion. Otherwise I don't think it is possible. It will be a quite different thing when the House becomes responsible.

**Dr. A. G. Menon.**—So the House is not responsible.

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—While I heartily sympathise with the noblest intentions of the mover of the resolution that a Standing Committee should be appointed, that this House which represents the people should have a hand or voice in distributing the Panchayat allotment, as an officer who is experienced in doing things practically and not in theorising, it will be far beyond the range of practical politics to carry out things. That is my humble opinion. For this reason I am constrained to oppose this resolution.

**Dr. A. G. Menon.**—That is what you have written to the Government.

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—Till the separation of the two Departments.

What they want is we are the representatives of the people. It is our money and the Panchayats are units of self-government. Therefore, we must have a voice in distributing the allotment. That is a most legitimate demand.

**Dr. A. R. Menon.**—With due deference to him and in spite of his capacity to interpret our meaning, we think that the

distribution is not done properly. The causes for it, the responsibility for it, we do not attribute to the Head of the Department. Who are responsible we are not prepared to say. We are not bound. We think and we have sufficient grounds to think that all is not well with the Department. Therefore, we wanted to devise some machinery by which there will be some equitable distribution by which there will be no lapses. And we honestly think that the manager cannot do the thing however efficient he may be, and there is also a belief that as soon as one receives Government salary, his cleverness, his energy, his intelligence and his greatness are exhibited. I am just interpreting your meaning.

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—I did not interpret in that way.

**Dr. A. R. Menon.**—What one man cannot do 5 men can easily do. There may be people here who are willing to devote time, and there have been instances of people coming forward to do the work and your refusing them to do the work. Do you want me to cite those instances? Looking after the selfish interests of officials, all such requests have been opposed.

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—I am talking from personal experience. I gave you my own personal experience with the best of intentions.

**Dr. A. G. Menon.**—We may close the discussion and put it to the votes. We had enough of talk.

**Deputy President.**—Mr. Ezhuthassan's amendment is accepted.

The resolution before the House, as amended, stands thus:—

*'This Council recommends that a Standing Committee with a non-official majority be appointed for the distribution of Panchayat allotments in the budget among the various Panchayats of the State'.*

*(The amended resolution was put and agreed to.)*

#### 10. Staff Selection Board.

**Rao Sahib Mr. T. V. Kasturi Ranga Ayyar.**—The House may be adjourned. There are only five minutes.

**Mr. A. B. Salem.**—No eleven can be got through. Number 10 is withdrawn.

**Deputy President.**—Is it withdrawn?

**Mr. K. T. Mathew.**—I withdraw it.

*Hence the following resolution was considered withdrawn:—*

*"Mr. K. T. Mathew.—This Council recommends to the Government to appoint a Staff Selection Board consisting of two officials and three Members elected by the non-official members of the Legislative Council."*